

# Exhibit 36



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.  
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • marylandpublicschools.org

March 16, 2018

Robin Davis, Principal  
Celebration Christian Academy  
6080 Foreland Garth  
Columbia, MD 21045

Dear Principal Davis,

In a letter from the BOOST Advisory Board dated December 19, 2017, schools participating in the BOOST Scholarship Program were notified that the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) would be conducting a review of student handbooks of all participating BOOST schools. The review was conducted because MSDE learned of schools that had admissions policies that directly contradicted the BOOST law, specifically with regard to sexual orientation.

Your school's handbook has been reviewed, and it has been determined that the handbook contains statements that contradict the BOOST law. Your school's handbook says the following:

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

#### **STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

Celebration Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, physical ability, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid program, athletics, or other school-administered programs.

All new students are admitted under a Performance Plan, which their academic progress and their behavior are evaluated during their first quarter of attendance. Celebration Christian Academy is not equipped to facilitate special needs students.

Enrollment in Celebration Christian Academy is a privilege, not a right. Parents must understand that continued enrollment of their children is dependent on their support of the academy, its staff, and its policies.

It should be noted that CCA supports the biblical view of marriage defined as a covenant between one man and one woman, and that God immutably bestows gender upon each person as male and female to reflect His image. Therefore, faculty, staff and student conduct is expected to align with this view.

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*CCA reserves the right to make changes to the content in this handbook when deemed necessary.*

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Those statements in the student handbook contradict the Assurances that an official from your school signed on behalf of the school in 2017. The Assurances address the legal requirement that a school that accepts BOOST scholarships “will not discriminate in student admission on the basis of ... sexual orientation.”

The law governing compliance with the BOOST non-discrimination clause states that a nonpublic school that does not comply “shall reimburse MSDE all scholarship funds received under the BOOST Program and may not charge the student tuition and fees instead.” Ineligibility for participating in BOOST is also a legal remedy. Based on that law, the BOOST Advisory Board has disqualified your school from the BOOST Program for the 2017-2018 school year.

It is our understanding that for the 2017-2018 school year, your school has 2 BOOST awardees with a total scholarship value of \$7,800. Pursuant to the law, the school may not charge the student tuition and fees to replace the BOOST scholarship funds that the school would have received if it were deemed an eligible BOOST school. The BOOST Advisory Board will notify the parents of the student that the law protects them from having to pay tuition and fees to replace the BOOST scholarship funds that will not be paid to your school. The Board will also explain that the student’s eligibility for a BOOST scholarship is not impacted by the fact that your school is an “ineligible” school. The BOOST scholarship is portable.

The Board wishes to inform you that your school may re-apply for BOOST school eligibility for the 2018-2019 school year. At that time, the Board may require a comprehensive review of the handbook and admission documents, as well as supplemental information on admission and denials of admission of students and other relevant information.

Finally, the Board wishes to point out that there are nonpublic schools in Maryland that disqualified themselves to be BOOST schools because, in light of their religious or moral beliefs, they could not sign the non-discrimination Assurance. That was the honorable decision, one that respected the use of public dollars to fund nonpublic education, one that respected the law. It is the expectation of the BOOST Advisory Board that all BOOST schools will follow that course of action, and do so before enrolling students with BOOST awards.

If you have questions about this matter, please contact Monica Kearns, Assistant State Superintendent, at (410) 767-8863 or [monica.kearns@maryland.gov](mailto:monica.kearns@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt D. Gallagher", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Matthew Gallagher  
Chair, BOOST Advisory Board

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cc: BOOST Advisory Board  
State Board Members  
Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.  
Kristy Michel  
Monica Kearns  
Parents of BOOST Students Enrolled in the School  
William Reinhard  
Gayle Secrist  
Elizabeth M. Kameen